

WORKING THROUGH BETRAYAL

King David's Trials

Background

- David's history is written in 1 Samuel
- Throughout his life, David endured many trials and dangerous events
- While not described in 1 Samuel, David expressed his feelings under these events in some of his Psalms
- Some of the most expressive of his writings are in Psalms 52 – 60
- We will look at Psalms 52, 54, and 55 – Key to David's feelings and growth in in the Lord while under betrayal x

Psalm 52: Betrayal by Doeg the Edomite

- Background to the Psalm
 - David was fleeing Saul's wrath after secretly meeting with Jonathan
 - He stopped at Nob and asked Ahimilech to give him support for a "secret errand" Saul had sent him on
 - Ahimilech allowed him to eat from the Table of Shew Bread and take Goliath's sword
 - Doeg the Edomite saw David there and went back to Saul
(1 Samuel 21.7)
 - When Doeg eventually told Saul that Ahimilech had aided David, he was furious
 - He ordered his guards to kill all of the Nob priests, but they refused
 - Saul then ordered Doeg to kill all 85 Nob priests and their families, which he did x

Psalm 52: Betrayal by Doeg the Edomite (cont'd)

- Doeg's wicked character (Ps 52.1-4)
 - (vss 1-2) He was **proud**
 - Hebrew word used here means smugness with a self-important secret
 - There was some time between his sighting David at Nob and relating the information to Saul
 - David left Nob and went to hide with the Philistines at Gad
 - From there he wandered among several locations
 - Finally, Doeg saw his chance to use this information for his benefit (1 Sam 22.6-10) x

Psalm 52: Betrayal by Doeg the Edomite (cont'd)

- Doeg's wicked character (Ps 52.1-4) (cont'd)
 - (vs 3) He **loved evil**
 - He valued telling Saul to gain personal favor over the harm it would cause the Nob priests, their families, and the town of Nob
 - Given the opportunity, he executed those who stood for righteousness rather than refuse, as had Saul's guards
 - (vs 4) He **used words as a weapon**
 - Illustrates how words are not morally neutral
 - Remember that words can be used for good or for evil (Jam 3.5-10)
 - Christians need to guard against using words for the wrong purposes x

Psalm 52: Betrayal by Doeg the Edomite (cont'd)

- Prophecy of Doeg's end (Ps 52.5-7)
 - Take note of a common principle in the Psalms
 - In a moral universe, evil fails in the end
 - Righteousness does triumph
 - But ... The timing of these usually doesn't meet the expectations of the righteous
 - The description of his end is pointed
 - “break you down forever”
 - “snatch you up”
 - “tear you away from your tent”
 - “uproot”
 - vss 6-7 show the reaction of the righteous to this
 - They stand in awe of God's judgement on him
 - They will also “laugh” at his situation x

Psalm 52: Betrayal by Doeg the Edomite (cont'd)

- A caution to the righteous
 - David now gives his own view on how to react to God's judgement on a wicked person (Ps 52.8-9)
 - He is alluding to the tree mentioned in Psalm 1
 - We are to remember the contrast between the way of the wicked and the way of the righteous
 - With that definition, David is specific on how we are to react
 - vs 8 > He trusts God for what He will do with the wicked and with the righteous
 - vs 9 > He praises God
 - vs 9 > He tells others of his faith in God x

Psalm 54: Betrayal by kinsmen

- Background to the Psalm

- Psalms 52, 54, and 55 are all linked to betrayal of David
 - Psalm 52: Betrayal by Doeg the Edomite
 - Psalm 54: Betrayal by his own tribe
 - Psalm 55: Betrayal by a close friend
 - Psalms 52 & 54 are from when David was fleeing from Saul, Psalm 55 is likely from when his son Absalom rebelled against him
- Psalm 54 begins with David's confession to Abiathar that he was responsible for the massacre of his family of priests at Nob
- David then becomes involved in rescuing Keilah from the Philistines
- When it is apparent that the city will turn him over to Saul, he flees
- He ends up in the area of Ziph, where his fellow Judahites reside
- Twice the Ziphites inform Saul of where he is hiding
- Rejected and betrayed, David calls God to his side ^x

Psalm 54: Betrayal by kinsmen *(cont'd)*

- (Ps 54.1) David knew Who he was calling on
 - He calls on God by Name
 - In those times, a person's name was the summary of his character
 - When Moses asks God Who should he say sent him to the Israelites, God said "I Am has sent me to you"
 - "I Am" is always in the present
 - God is eternal, self-existent, self-sufficient
 - This is Who David is appealing to for help, and no other
 - The Hebrew words David actually uses in vss 1-4 see how his plea builds up to calling on God's full character
 - vss 1-4 use "Elohim" a common name for God
 - In vs 4, David uses "Adonai", which is "Lord"
 - Finally in vs 6, David appeals to the full character of God by using "Yahweh" x

BETRAYALS OF DAVID

Scripture snapshots for Slide 9 – David’s use of God’s Names progressively in Psalm 54:1-4

1 Save me, O God, by ^aYour name,
And ¹vindicate me by ^bYour power.

2 ^aHear my prayer, O God;
^bGive ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For strangers have ^arisen against me
And ^bviolent men have ^csought my ¹life;
They have ^dnot set God before them.

4 Behold, ^aGod is my helper;
The Lord is ¹the ^bsustainer of my soul.

4 Behold, ^aGod is my helper;
The Lord is ¹the ^bsustainer of my soul

face r;	The Lord	is	the sustainer
S Trl	'ădō-nā' y	b	sō-m ^e kē'
a Trl	'ā-dōn	'ānī	b smk
it Trl	'ā-dōn	'ānī	b smk
ng's s;	H136	H136	H5564

Hebrew word

6 ^{1a}Willingly I will sacrifice to You;
I will give ^bthanks to Your name, O LORD, for it is

face	I will give thanks	to Your	name, O LORD,	for it is
S Trl	ō'-dē(h)	kā'	šim	yhwh kī
ia Trl	ydh 2	'āt-tā(h)	šēm 1	yhwh kī:
ot Trl	ydh 2	'th 1	šēm 1	yhwh ky

Hebrew word

Common Name

vss 1-4:
- God is referred to as “Elohim”, a common name for Him



God’s Lordship

vs 4:
- God is referred to as “Adonai”, highlighting His Lordship



Fullness of God

vs 4:
- God is referred to as “Yahweh”, His full Name in all of its implications

Psalm 54: Betrayal by kinsmen *(cont'd)*

- David then asks God to rescue him from his impossible situation
 - (vs 2) First he asks God to hear his specific plea
 - (vs 3) Then he describes his situation
 - Evil men were plotting to kill him
 - These men had no concern for God's will
 - Note the model here for enlisting God's help
 - (vs 4) David reminds himself of the worth of appealing to God
 - He is addressing the sovereign God over all
 - He remembers when the Lord has helped him in drastic times before
 - Peter remembered this passage when he penned 1 Pet 5.7 ^x

Psalm 54: Betrayal by kinsmen *(cont'd)*

- David then asks God to rescue him from his impossible situation *(cont'd)*
 - (vs 5) David finally makes his specific request
 - He asks that God turn the evil of his foes back on them and destroy them
 - Is this request against Christian principles ??
 - Pray for mercy for our enemies
 - Also pray that God executes his justice against evil doers
 - David closes by promising to give God a free-will offering (vss 6-7)
 - This is not a bribe to finalize God's support
 - He anticipates God's answer to his prayer based on His love for him, and His prior support x

Psalm 55: Betrayal by a close friend

- Background to the Psalm

- Ps 52 - David is betrayed by Doeg the Edomite
- Ps 54 - David is betrayed by his Judahite kinsmen, the Ziphites
- Ps 55 – David is betrayed by a close friend
 - Some suggest this was Ahithophel, his trusted counselor
 - Ahithophel sided with Absalom during his rebellion against David
 - But would the close words of Ps 55.13-14 be written of a counselor ?
 - David is writing from Jerusalem, but he learned of Ahithophel's betrayal after he left Jerusalem, so this likely isn't Ahithophel
 - There is no other hint of who this close friend might be
 - This is likely written during Absalom's rebellion, when David ..
 - ... is distraught over Absalom drawing so many of his people away
 - ... has no idea who he can really trust
 - ... sees nothing but dismay and danger
 - ... is sinking into deep depression
 - Psalm 55 alternates between his description of the wickedness of his oppressors, and his state of mind ^x

Psalm 55: Betrayal by a close friend (cont'd)

- David describes his agony over his situation
 - Note the irony here
 - In Psalms 52 & 54, he wasn't king yet, and was pursued by Saul
 - In Psalm 55, he has been king for some time, and Saul is dead !
 - He should be enjoying peace, yet he is in worse agony now
 - Pay attention to the strong words he uses to describe it (Ps 52.1-5)
 - vs 2: He is “restless” and “distraught”
 - vs 4: He is in “anguish” ... “terrors of death” assail him
 - vs 5: He experiences “fear and trembling” and “horror”
 - Note how the words escalate as he describes his state of mind
 - David now expresses a change unlike his previous Psalms (vss 6-8)
 - Previously, he has always confronted evil head on
 - He has called on God for wisdom and increasing faith
 - Now he describes a desire to flee out of his situation to a beautiful and safe place
 - God calls on His children to **persevere**, not flee their trials and tests x

Psalm 55: Betrayal by a close friend (cont'd)

- David swings from his state of mind to describing his foes (Ps 55.9-11)
 - Who is the “enemy” named in vs 3 ?
 - David describes what is going on in his people (“main street”)
 - (vs 9) “violence and strife” (NASB / NIV)
 - (vs 10) “iniquity and mischief” / “malice and abuse”
 - (vs 11) “oppression and deceit” / “threats and lies”
 - Wicked people at work !!
- Is there any difference in our American society today ?
- What do we do until Christ comes back ?
 - Note David’s prayer in vs 9
 - He was referring to God’s act at the Tower of Babel
 - We should pray that God keeps evil doers confused and unable to fully organize x

Psalm 55: Betrayal by a close friend *(cont'd)*

- Once again, David returns to focusing on his anguish (55.11-14)
 - He is like a therapist, probing the root of this agony he feels
 - He determines that this betrayal of his close friend has made his anguish far worse, different from other times
 - He describes him as “a man of my equal” > just like David
 - He was his companion and intimate friend
 - They fellowshiped and worshipped together
- The low point of the Psalm 55 is vs 15
 - David longs for the destruction of his foes
 - “Let them go down alive to Sheol”
 - He is referring to the deaths of Korah & his followers
 - Note that he doesn’t include his betraying friend in this curse
- The turning point is vs 16
 - Before, in vss 1-2, David calls on God from his agony
 - Now he calls confidently on God to save him, based on his prior experience
 - vs 16: “the Lord **will** save me”
 - vs 17: “He **will** hear my voice”
 - vs 18: “He **will** redeem my soul in peace”
 - vs 19: He has confidence that God **will** save him from his foes ^x

Psalm 55: Betrayal by a close friend (cont'd)

- David now considers his betrayer once more
 - Since his full faith in God has returned, he focuses only on the betrayal, itself
 - vs 20: The betrayer betrayed his covenant
 - vs 21: The reason he did that is because he is a hypocrite
 - What do we learn about prayer from Psalm 55 ?
 - David cries out to **God as the source** for his relief
 - He passionately describes in detail what is assailing him
 - He particularly cites the evil of his enemies, asks God to handle it
 - He goes through these steps repeatedly > example of perseverance
 - Notice the change in David's state of mind as he does this
 - As he repeats this process, he remembers that God is his only reliable source of help
 - He recounts the many times he has seen God rescue him, and turns to God in faith that He will do this again x

Guidance for the Righteous

- What are we to do in the face of evil attacks and frightening circumstances ?
 - Psalm 55.22a “cast your burden on the Lord...”
 - Remember how much a man of anxiety Peter was ?
 - Then he learned, and wrote 1 Pet 5.7
 - Putting our cares onto the Lord enables us to stand in the face of adversity
 - vs 22b “He **will** sustain you”
 - vs 22c “He **will** never allow the righteous to be shaken”
 - vs 23a “But You O God **will** bring them down”
 - vs 23b Finally, David concludes to put his full trust in God

“... But I will trust in You.” x x

Resources

- New American Standard Bible 1995 Edition
- Christian Standard Bible
- New International Version Bible
- *Psalms Volume 2: An Expositional Commentary*,
James Montgomery Boice
- *The Biblical Illustrator: The Psalms*,
Joseph X. Exell
- *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*,
John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck, Dallas
Theological Seminary
- *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*,
James Strong
- *Various other resources*